A leading female professor of energy leaves the US to return to her alma mater as vice president.

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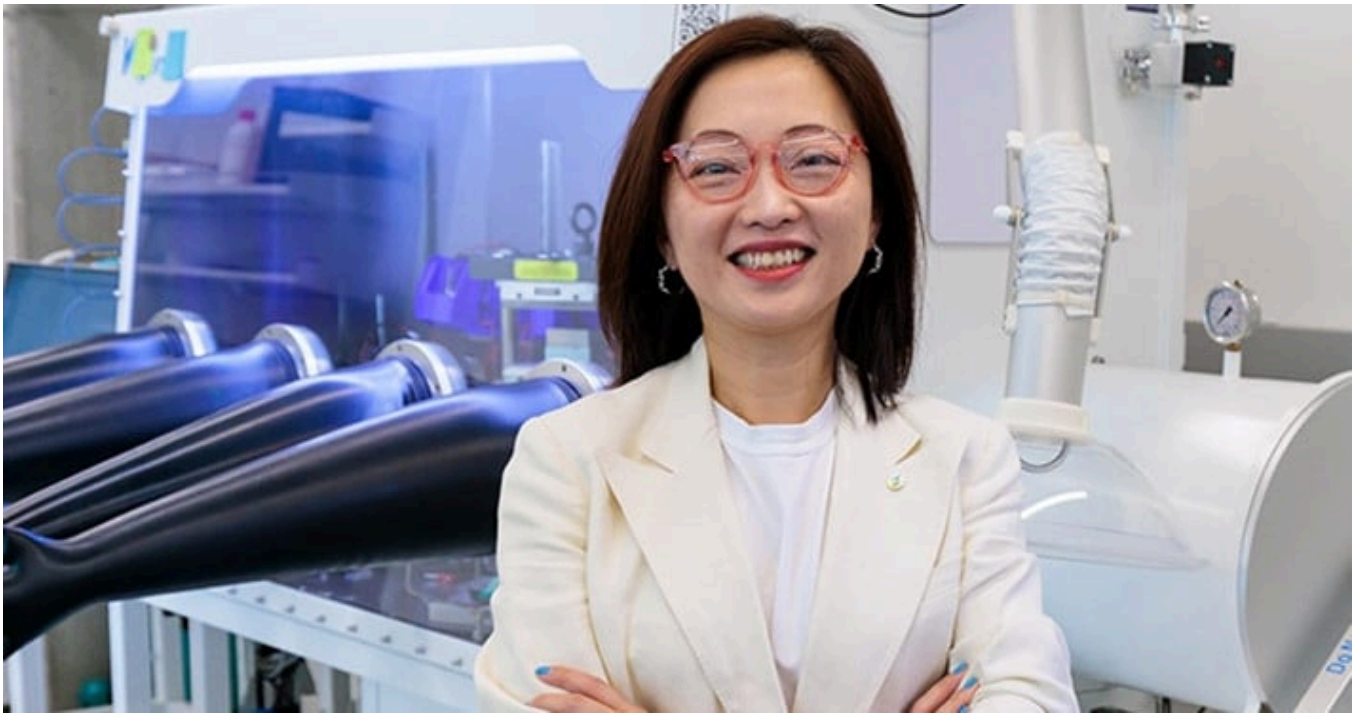


She will also be appointed as a Distinguished University Professor, the highest academic rank at NTU for faculty members with outstanding, interdisciplinary academic achievements.

According to NTU's website, in his new role, Professor Meng will lead collaborations between NTU and leading global businesses and organizations, and promote the establishment of international collaborative research institutes to enhance the university's global standing.

Former NTU students return to the university to take on leadership positions.

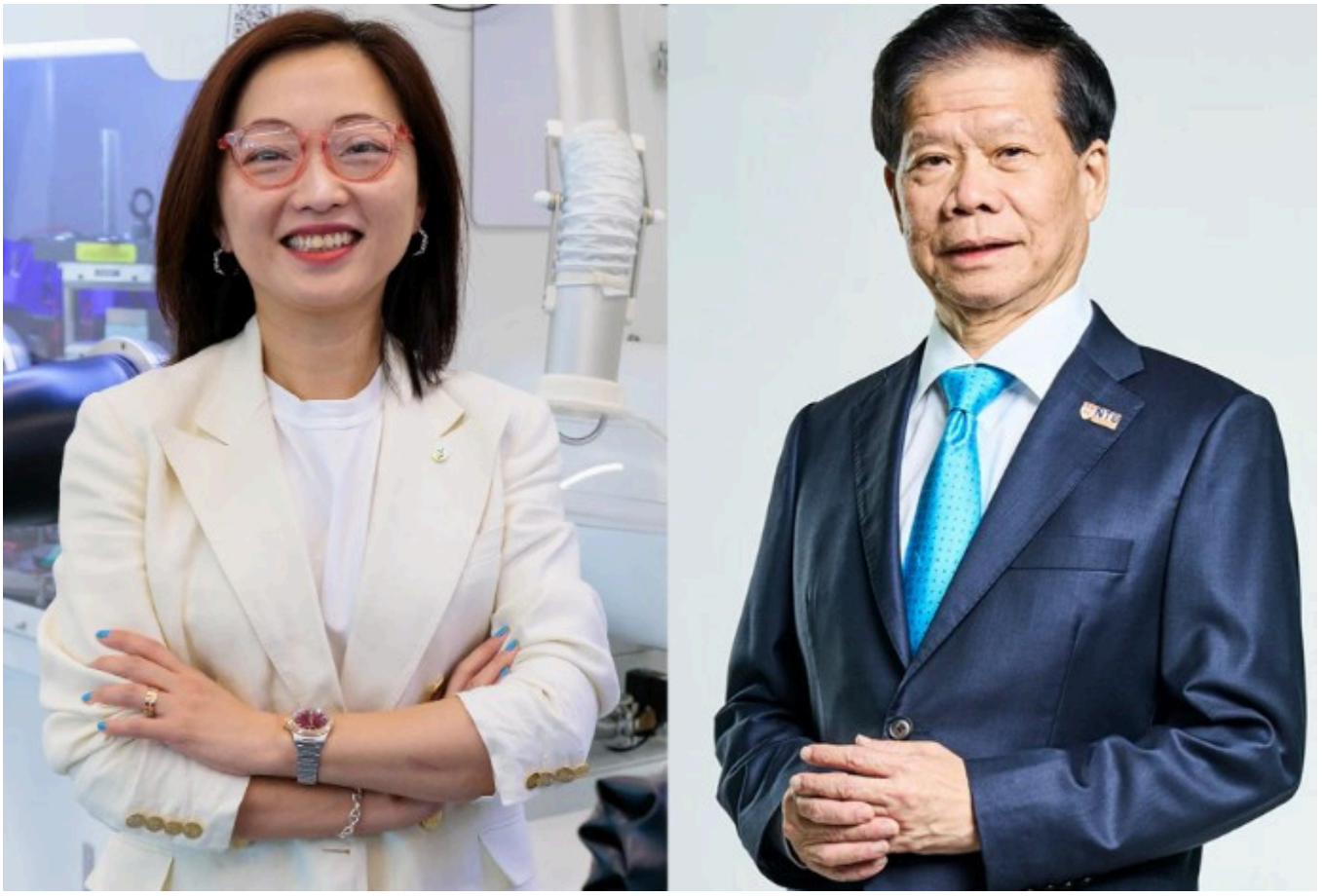
As an NTU alumnus, Ms. Meng said her passion for materials science and engineering began in college, after an experiment on superconducting materials that created a magnetic lift phenomenon – an experience that shaped her later research path.

NTU President, Professor Ho Teck Hua, said: “It is wonderful to welcome Shirley back to NTU – where her scientific journey began. Energy storage is one of the biggest technological challenges of our time, and Shirley is one of the world’s leading experts in this field.”

Her ability to connect cutting-edge research with practical applications in industry makes her the ideal person to lead NTU's business collaboration strategy.

Professor Meng will officially take up his duties on July 1, 2026, replacing Professor Lam Khin Yong, who will leave the position in May after decades of dedication to the university.

Sharing her thoughts on returning to NTU, she said: “NTU is where I earned my first degree in science and engineering, nurtured my passion for science, and opened up a long journey in my academic career. I am deeply honored to be entrusted with this responsibility.”



Leading energy storage scientist, Professor Shirley Meng (left), will succeed Professor Lam Khin Yong (right) as Vice-Chancellor for Corporate Partnerships at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore). Photo: *NTU*

She stated her desire to build a more dynamic academic community at the university, while expanding connections with global partners to promote fundamental research linked to practical impact, develop new technologies, and enhance interdisciplinary collaboration to provide a better learning experience for students.

Pioneering scientist in next-generation batteries.

Professor Meng is currently a Professor of Molecular Engineering at the Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering, University of Chicago (USA). She also directs the Energy Technology Initiative, a key research program on clean energy transition.

During this transition period, she continued to hold part-time positions at the University of Chicago and participated in the Energy Transition Network—a program she founded to promote the global transition from fossil fuels to clean energy.

Prior to joining the University of Chicago in 2021, she taught and conducted research at the University of California San Diego and the University of Florida.

Professor Meng is renowned for his research methodology that combines theoretical models with advanced experimental techniques such as cryo-electron microscopy and spectroscopy under real-world operating conditions, thereby creating breakthroughs in battery performance, safety, and sustainability.

Her research has made a significant contribution to the global transition to clean energy and has been applied in numerous patented technologies.

In 2024, her research team announced the world's first solid-state sodium battery without an anode – a technology expected to help realize inexpensive, fast-charging, and high-capacity batteries for electric vehicles and energy storage systems.

Several battery startups have also emerged from her laboratory. Among them is South 8 Technologies, a company that commercializes liquefied gas electrolyte technology, enabling lithium-ion batteries to operate in extreme temperatures ranging from -60°C to +60°C.

She also co-founded UNIGRID, a US-based company that develops sodium batteries, and ExPost Technology, a business specializing in battery recycling and upgrades.

From 2022-2025, she served as the founding director of the Energy Storage Research Alliance, a next-generation battery technology innovation center funded by the U.S. Department of Energy.

In addition to his research, Professor Meng also participates in numerous scientific councils and business advisory boards, contributing to the strategic direction of energy research and the commercialization of new battery technologies.

She has received numerous prestigious international awards such as the Shep Wolsky Battery Innovation Award, the Faraday Medal from the Royal Society of Chemistry, the American Chemical Society's Excellence in Electrochemical Research Award, and the CAREER Award from the National Science Foundation.

Professor Meng is also a member of several major scientific organizations such as the Electrochemical Society, the Materials Research Society, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).